

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

OMB-01 TRSE-00 AID-05 /067 W

-----059326 170706Z /23

R 170320Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6878

INFO AMCONSUL MEDAN

AMCONSUL SURABAYA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 JAKARTA 2154

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PINT, PINS, ID, SOPN

SUBJECT: A MOSLEM VIEWS THE POLITICAL SCENE

REF: (A) JAKARTA 1885 (DTG 100820Z FEB 78)

(B) JAKARTA 2081 (DTG 150930Z FEB 78)

(C) JAKARTA 2123 (DTG 160801Z FEB 78)

1. SUMMBARY ACCORDING TO A PROMINENT PPP LEADER, MOSLEMS ARE STILL HOPING TO TRADE OFF THEIR AGREEMENT TO SUPPORT SUHARTO'S RE-ELECTION FOR THE GOI'S WILLINGNESS TO COMPROMISE ON THE KEPERCAYAAN ISSUE. THE PPP IS INCREASINGLY CONCERNED, HOWEVER, ABOUT AN ALLEGED GOVERNMENT ATTEMPT TO BLAME RECENT STUDENT UNREST ON MOSLEM INSTIGATION. END SUMMARY.

2. DRS. M. ZAMRONI-FORMER GENERATION OF '66 YOUTH LEADER, UNITY DEVELOPMENT PARTY (PPP) MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND 1978 INTERNATIONAL VISITOR GRANTEE-RECENTLY PROVIDED US HIS PROJECTION OF PPP STRATEGY FOR THE UPCOMING SESSION OF THE PEOPLE'S CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY (MPR) AND HIS VIEWS ON THE CURRENT POLITICAL UNREST IN INDONESIA. ZAMRONI'S COMMENTS ON THE MPR SHOULD BE CONSIDERED IN CONJUNCTION WITH REFERENCE A, WHICH OUTLINED THE GOVERNMENT PARTY
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(GOLKAR) VIEWPOINT.

3. ZAMRONI AGREED WITH A RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENT OF MPR/DPR CHAIRMAN MALIK THAT THE FOUR MAIN ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED IN (OR BEFORE) THE MPR INVOLVE: (1) KEPERCAYAAN, THE JAVANESE CONCEPT OF MYSTICISM; (2) THE GOVERNMENT'S DRAFT PRESCRIPTION FOR PANCASILA, COMMONLY CALLED P4;

(3) THE RULES FOR ELECTION THE PRESIDENT; AND (4) THE STATUS OF THE GOVERNMENT'S YOUTH ORGANIZATION, KNPI. (A FULLER ACCOUNT OF THESE ISSUES AND OF MALIK'S STATEMENT WERE REPORTED IN REF (C).) OF THESE FOUR ISSUES, SAID ZAMRONI, THE LAST IS BY FAR THE LEAST IMPORTANT, BOTH TO THE MOSLEMS AND THE GOVERNMENT. THE BARGAINING AND INFIGHTING WILL REVOLVE AROUND THE OTHER THREE, WHICH ARE INTIMATELY INTER-RELATED.

4. ACCORDING TO ZAMRONI, WHILE MOSLEMS REMAIN ADAMANTLY OPPOSED TO ANY IMPLIED ENDORSEMENT OF KEPERCAYAAN IN THE GBHN AND P4, THEY ARE NOT INSISTING THAT ALL MENTION OF THE CONCEPT BE ELIMINATED. KEPERCAYAAN, SAID ZAMRONI, IS "JUST A WORD," WHICH MOSLEMS CAN LIVE WITH "AS WE HAVE LIVED WITH IT THE LAST FIVE YEARS" (A REFERENCE TO THE MENTION OF KEPERCAYAAN IN THE CURRENT GBHN). THE PROBLEM THIS YEAR, FROM THE PPP VIEWPOINT, IS THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS SHARPENING THE EXISTING FORMULATION IN THE GBHN AS A DELIBERATE TACTIC TO SUBSTANTIVELY STRENGTHEN THE JAVANESE MYSTICAL MOVEMENT, A POTENTIAL ALLY OF THE GOVERNMENT IN ANY POLITICAL SHOWDOWN WITH THE MOSLEMS. IF WE ACCEPT THE GOVERNMENT'S WORDING, SAID ZAMRONI, IT WILL BE INTERPRETED BY THE INDONESIAN PUBLIC AS AN ADMISSION BY MOSLEMS THAT KEPERCAYAAN IS GROWING IN STRENGTH, PUTTING MOSLEMS AT A TACTICAL DISADVANTAGE.

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5. WE NOTED THAT THIS ANALYSIS SUGGESTED A COMPROMISE MIGHT BE IN THE OFFING, PERHAPS INVOLVING A FORMULATION LIKE THAT IN THE CURRENT GBHN. WHILE AGREEING AN ACCOMMODATION WAS POSSIBLE AND DESIRABLE, ZAMRONI ADDED TWO QUALIFICATIONS. IN THE FIRST PLACE, HE SAID, IT IS NOT CLEAR THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS WILLING TO COMPROMISE SUBSTANTIVELY. HE REVEALED THAT PRESIDENT SUHARTO HAD ALREADY PRIVATELY CALLED IN THE PPP'S "ELDER STATESMAN" ON RELIGIOUS MATTERS AND OFFERED HIM A COSMETIC COMPROMISE, WHICH WOULD LEAVE THE GOVERNMENT DRAFT WORDING ON KEPERCAYAAN UNCHANGED BUT WOULD MOVE THE TOPIC FROM THE "RELIGION" SECTION TO THE "CULTURE" SECTION OF THE RESPECTIVE DOCUMENTS. THE PPP HAD REJECTED THIS COMPROMISE, SINCE IT GAVE NOTHING IN SUBSTANCE AND, WHEREVER THE WORDS APPEARED, "THEY WOULD BE INTERPRETED THE SAME WAY BY THE PEOPLE." ACCORDING TO ZAMRONI, MOREOVER, IN THE PAST FEW DAYS, GOLKAR HAD BROKEN OFF NEGOTIATIONS WITH PPP ON MPR ISSUES AND HAD REFUSED TO DISCUSS THEM FURTHER, DESPITE PPP EFFORTS TO REOPEN TALKS.

6. IN THE SECOND PLACE, THE PARLIAMENTARIAN WENT ON, THE PPP WAS NOT ONLY UNWILLING TO ACCEPT A STRONGER

MENTION OF KEPERCAYAAN BUT WAS EQUALLY OPPOSED TO A MERE REPETITION OF THE STATUS QUO GBHN FORMULA. WHY SHOULD MOSLEMS TAKE THE CURRENT WORDING, ASKED ZAMRONI, WHEN "WE ARE STRONGER THAN WE WERE THE LAST TIME?" HE CONCEDED THAT, DESPITE PPP'S SLIGHTLY INCREASED NUMBERS IN THE NEW MPR/DPR, GOLKAR AND ITS ALLIES STILL HELD AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY, BUT HE SAID THAT PPP BELIEVED IT HAD SPECIAL LEVERAGE ON THE ISSUE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. THAT IS REALLY THE MAIN ISSUE TO THE PALACE, ZAMRONI BELIEVES, AND IF WE ARE "STRONG ON THAT ISSUE IT CAN BE USED AS AN AFFECTIVE BARGAINING CHIP.

7. THE KEY CLASH, HE CONTINUED, WILL BE OVER HOW AND BY WHOM THE PRESIDENT IS NOMINATED. (NOTE: THERE ARE NO CONFIDENTIAL

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CONSTITUTIONAL OR PERMANENT REGULATIONS ON THIS. EACH MPR MAKES ITS OWN RULES.) ZAMRONI CLAIMED THAT GOLKAR'S ORIGINAL POSITION WAS THAT A MINIMUM OF TWO FACTIONS OF THE MPR WOULD HAVE TO JOIN TO LEGALLY NOMINATE A CANDIDATE, EFFECTIVELY BLOCKING PPP FROM INDEPENDENT ACTION. GOLKAR WAS "FORCED" TO GIVE UP THIS POSITION, ZAMRONI SAID, BECAUSE OF INTER-PARTY OPPOSITION. THE

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OMB-01 TRSE-00 AID-05 /067 W
-----061085 170705Z /11

R 170320Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6879
INFO AMCONSUL MEDAN
AMCONSUL SURABAYA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 JAKARTA 2154

CURRENT GOLKAR POSITION IS THAT FACTIONS, RATHER THAN

INDIVIDUALS, WILL NOMINATE CANDIDATES, SO THAT THE PALACE, BY MANIPULATING MORE MALLEABLE PPP MEMBERS, CAN PRECLUDE ANY INDEPENDENT ACTION BY MORE AGGRESSIVE MEMBERS. THE CURRENT PPP POSITION IS THAT ANY 30 MEMBERS OF A FACTION SHOULD BE ABLE TO NOMINATE A CANDIDATE, AND ZAMRONI IS CONFIDENT THAT THERE ARE AT LEAST 30 "BOLD" MEMBERS OF PPP WHO WOULD, IF PUSHED, RUN THE RISK OF NOMINATING SOMEONE OTHER THAN SUHARTO.

8. ZAMRONI SAID THAT PPP HAD ALREADY OFFICIALLY BUT QUIETLY ASKED FORMER ARMED FORCES CHIEF OF STAFF GEN. (RET.) A. H. NASUTION TO BECOME A CANDIDATE IF NECESSARY, BUT NASUTION HAD FLATLY REFUSED. LOWER LEVEL, LESS SPECIFIC FEELERS TO FORMER JAKARTA GOVERNOR LT. GEN. ALI SADIKIN HAD BEEN SIMILARLY BRUSHED OFF. DESPITE THESE REJECTIONS, SAID ZAMRONI, PPP HAS A CONTINGENCY CANDIDATE WILLING TO RUN, CHAIRMAN OF PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION VII RACHMAT MULYOMISENO. IF PPP GETS ITS WAY ON RULES TO NOMINATE CANDIDATES, AND IF GOLKAR WON'T COMPROMISE ON KEPERCAYAAN, SAID ZAMRONI RACHMAT WILL BE NOMINATED "IN THE INTERESTS OF DEMOCRACY." EVEN IF THE FINAL RULES PRECLUDE RACHMAT'S NOMINATION, ACCORDING TO CONFIDENTIAL

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ZAMRONI, SOME PPP-ERS WILL TRY TO NOMINATE HIM IF GOLKAR IS HARD-NOSED ON THE MYSTICISM ISSUE. ZAMRONI SAID HE IS STILL "OPTIMISTIC," HOWEVER, THAT A COMPROMISE COULD BE REACHED ON KEPERCAYAAN AND THE NOMINATION OF PRESIDENT, SINCE GOLKAR IS ABOVE ALL INTERESTED IN SMOOTHLY RE-ELECTING SUHARTO.

9. POLITICAL UNREST. ZAMRONI SAID THAT THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION IS VERY TENSE, ESPECIALLY IN BANDUNG. HE HAD OCCASION TO VISIT BANDUNG SEVERAL DAYS AGO, ACCOMPANYING HIS DAUGHTER ON COLLEGE PLACEMENT INTERVIEWS, AND TALKED FOR AN HOUR WITH THE (SINCE FIRED) RECTOR OF THE BANDUNG TECHNICAL INSTITUTE (ITB), PROF. DR. ISKANDAR ALISYAHBANA. HE SAID THE RECTOR AT THAT TIME WAS UNDER GREAT, CONFLICTING PRESSURES FROM STUDENTS AND THE GOVERNMENT AND REALLY DIDN'T KNOW WHAT DIRECTION TO MOVE. ALTHOUGH INITIALLY THE MILITARY SHOWED GREAT SENSITIVITY TO THE DANGERS OF A CONFRONTATION WITH ITB STUDENTS, ZAMRONI REPORTED THE RECTOR AS SAYING, THE SOLDIERS' PATIENCE HAS APPARENTLY WORN THIN AND THEY WERE MUCH ROUGHER WHEN THEY RE-ENTERED THE CAMPUS ON FEBRUARY 9 THEN ON EARLIER INCURSIONS. THE RECTOR ALSO BELIEVED THE REMAINING CORE OF ACTIVIST STUDENTS WAS DETERMINED NOT TO GIVE IN TO GOVERNMENT PRESSURE AND WILL PERSIST IN THEIR "ACADEMIC STRIKE." (SPECIFIC DETAILS FROM ZAMRONI ON INCIDENTS OF PHYSICAL VIOLENCE AT ITB AND THE POSSIBLE SPREADING OF THE STUDNET STRIKE TO

OTHER CAMPUSES ARE REPORTED IN REFERENCE B.)

10. SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE VISITING ITB, ZAMRONI ALSO WENT TO JOGJAKARTA'S GADJAH MADA (GM) UNIVERSITY AND FOUND A SIMILARLY TENSE SITUATION THERE. HE SAID THAT HE HAD DIFFICULTY ENTERING THE GM CAMPUS BECAUSE A LARGE "DISCUSSION GROUP" WAS THEN MEETING. THE GM RECTOR, WHILE CONFIDENTIAL

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CONCERNED ABOUT THE SITUATION ON HIS CAMPUS, HOWEVER, IS CONFIDENT IT WILL NOT DETERIORATE INTO VIOLENCE.

11. ZAMRONI EXPRESSED GREAT WORRY ABOUT AN ALLEGED EFFORT BY THE GOVERNMENT TO BLAME RECENT STUDENT UNREST ON MOSLEM AGITATORS, A CHARGE THE PP LEADER DESCRIBED AS "RIDICULOUS." WHILE ZAMRONI CONCEDED THAT HE AND OTHER YOUNG PPP MEMBERS WERE IN CONTACT WITH SOME ELEMENTS OF THE ACTIVIST YOUTH MOVEMENT, ESPECIALLY IN THE EXTRA-UNIVERSITY ORGANIZATIONS, HE SAID THEY HAD LITTLE DIRECT INFLUENCE WITH THE UNIVERSITY STUDENT COUNCILS, WHERE RECENT DISTURBANCES CENTERED. MOREOVER, PPP HAS CONSISTENTLY URGED MODERATION, BOTH PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY, ON ANY STUDENTS UNDER THEIR INFLUENCE, ON THE THEORY THAT TOO DIRECT A CHALLENGE TO THE GOVERNMENT GAVE SECURITY OFFICIALS "AN EXCUSE" TO CRACK DOWN ON THE MOSLEMS.

12. ACCORDING TO ZAMRONI, THE EAST JAVA SECURITY COMMAND (LAKSUS) HAS ISSUED AN ORDER TO ITS AGENTS TO STOP OR DISRUPT ALL ACTIVITIES OF THE MOSLEM UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (HMI), CLAIMING THAT HMI IS BEHIND THE GOVERNMENT'S TROUBLES IN EAST JAVA. ZAMRONI (WHO IS ASSOCIATED WITH A RIVAL MOSLEM YOUTH GROUP) SAID THAT, RATHER THAN INCITING TROUBLE, HMI WAS HEAVILY INFILTRATED BY GOVERNMENT AGENTS. ZAMRONI ALSO CITED UNNAMED "CONFIDENTIAL SOURCES" WHO HAVE REPORTED TO PPP THAT JAKARTA MILITARY AND SECURITY OFFICIALS ARE PRIVATELY SPREADING RUMORS OF MOSLEM DISSIDENT CONNECTIONS, AS AN EXCUSE FOR A GENERAL CRACKDOWN ON MOSLEMS, SHOULD ONE BE NECESSARY TO CONTROL THE MPR. ZAMRONI SAYS PPP IS TAKING THE THREAT OF A GOVERNMENT CRACKDOWN SERIOUSLY, THOUGH SOME PARTY ELEMENTS ARE DETERMINED NOT TO MEEKLY BACK DOWN IN THE FACE OF THE PRESSURE.

13. COMMENT. ZAMRONI IS PROBABLY OVERSTATING HIS PARTY'S WILLINGNESS TO CONFRONT THE GOVERNMENT AND CONFIDENTIAL

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ABILITY TO INFLUENCE THE MPR. WHILE SOME YOUNGER PPP ELEMENTS HAVE PROBABLY CONVINCED THEMSELVES NOW THAT THEY ARE WILLING TO STAND UP TO GOLKAR AND THE PALACE, RECENT HISTORY SUGGESTS THAT A COMBINATION OF GOVERNMENT PRESSURE, IMPORTUNING FROM MORE CAUTIOUS AND SENIOR PARTY COLLEAGUES AND THEIR OWN SHORT-TERM SELF-INTEREST WOULD PROBABLY LEAD PPP MEMBERS TO ACCEPT A COMPROMISE WHICH DID LITTLE MORE THAN ALLOW THEM TO SAVE FACE WITH THEIR EXTRA-PARLIAMENTARY MOSLEM CONSTITUENCY. THE ALLEGED GOVERNMENT CAMPAIGN TO TIE MOSLEMS TO THE UPSURGE IN DISSIDENCE, WHICH OTHER OSOURCES ARE ALSO REPORTING, MAY VERY WELL BE A GOVERNMENT TACTIC TO FRIGHTEN AND SOFTEN UP THE PPP.

14. IT IS STILL AN OPEN QUESTION, HOWEVER, WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT IS REALLY LOOKING FOR A COMPROMISE OR IS DETERMINED TO FORCE THEIR TOTAL VIEWPOINT IN THE MPR. GOLKAR'S APPARENT DECISION TO BREAK OFF NEGOTIATIONS WITH PPP ON MPR ISSUES MAY BE NO MORE THAN A TACTICAL PRECURSOR OF A NEW OFFER OF COMPROMISE, BUT IT COULD ALSO SIGNIFY A HARDENING OF THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION. AN EDITORIAL IN YESTERDAY'S SUARA KARYA, THE GOLKAR PAPER, WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THE POSSIBILITY OF COMPROMISE, STRESSES THE GOVERNMENT'S WILLINGNESS TO RESORT TO VOTING IF NECESSARY TO CARRY THE DAY. A SIMILAR TOUGH LINE WAS REFLECTED IN THE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOLKAR PARLIAMENTARIAN REPORTED IN REFERENCE A. SHOULD THE GOVERNMENT DEMAND TOTAL ACCEPTANCE OF ITS POSITION ON KEPERCAYAAN--AND GOLKAR, OF COURSE, HAS THE VOTES TO PASS WHATEVER IT WANTS--EVEN THE MEEK PPP MIGHT BE PROVOKED TO DENY SUHARTO A UNANIMOUS RE-ELECTION AND THE GOVERNMENT ITS HIGHLY PRIZED CONSENSUS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MOSLEMS, POLITICAL STABILITY, AGREEMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978JAKARTA02154
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780073-0430
Format: TEL
From: JAKARTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780242/aaaabjqi.tel
Line Count: 310
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: fdf9a2d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 JAKARTA 1885, 78 JAKARTA 2081, 78 JAKARTA 2123
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3564184
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: A MOSLEM VIEWS THE POLITICAL SCENE
TAGS: PINT, PINS, SOPN, ID
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fdf9a2d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014